



Reinvest in Minnesota Wetlands Reserve Program Acquisition and Restoration, Phase 3, 2011.



Outdoor Heritage Funds: \$13M

Grant	\$13,000,000
Leveraged Funds*	\$20,800,000
Total Budget	\$33,800,000

* Leveraged Funds include required 25% local match

Project Sponsor:

Minnesota Board of Water & Soil Resources (BWSR)

Partners:

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Minnesota Soil & Water Conservation Districts

Grant Period:

2011

Project Contact:

Kevin Lines (BWSR)
520 Lafayette Rd. Suite 200
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-297-1894
Email: kevin.lines@state.mn.us

Project Narrative

The RIM-WRP Partnership combines the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) program, administered by the Board of Water and Soil Resources, with the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) administered by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. At the local level, RIM-WRP is implemented by Soil and Water Conservation Districts in partnership with other organizations, including Ducks Unlimited and the Minnesota Waterfowl Association and with private landowners. The RIM-WRP partnership enables Minnesota to leverage \$1.6 of federal WRP funding for every state dollar available through RIM Reserve.

Minnesota has lost over 99% of its original native prairie and over 90% of its prairie wetlands over the last century and a half. In 1986, the Reinvest in Minnesota Resources Act was enacted to restore certain marginal and environmentally sensitive agricultural land to protect soil and water quality and support fish and wildlife habitat. The program targets priority land habitats; critical shore lands of rivers and lakes; shallow lakes; wetlands and wetland-associated watersheds. The program is the premier wetland restoration program in the state and Minnesota is a national leader in wetland restoration. Key benefits of this program include:

- Parcels are protected for fish, game and other wildlife.
- Increased participation of private landowners in habitat projects.
- Restored and enhanced wetland and adjacent upland habitat.
- Increased wildlife productivity.
- Agricultural lands are converted to grasslands to sustain functioning prairie/native grassland systems.
- Water is kept on the land to reduce flood potential and degradation of aquatic habitat.
- Protected, restored and enhanced shallow lakes and enhanced shallow lake productivity
- Improved aquatic vegetation.
- Protected and restored habitat for migratory and unique Minnesota species.

The RIM Reserve program compensates private landowners for granting conservation easements and establishing native vegetation habitat on economically marginal, flood-prone, environmentally sensitive or highly erodible lands. The program protects the state's water and soil resources by permanently restoring wetlands, adjacent native grassland wildlife habitat complexes and permanent riparian buffers.

The 2011 RIM-WRP partnership accelerates wetland protection efforts and will provide important benefits to the citizens of Minnesota by restoring and permanently protecting wetlands and associated upland native grassland wildlife habitat through perpetual easements on private lands. This funding will leverage \$20.8 million of federal WRP funds for the State of Minnesota. Since WRP receives annual appropriations from the 2008 Federal Farm Bill, this leveraging opportunity is available for at least the next two years.

Proposed Measurable Outcomes

Enroll 77 permanent conservation easements totaling 9,657 acres of wetland grassland wildlife habitat complexes, resulting in the restoration of approximately 385 previously drained wetland basins totaling 3,219 wetland acres, and the restoration of native grassland prairies on approximately 6,438 acres. In total, this is an area equivalent to the city of Mankato, MN.

Actual Measurable Outcomes

A total of 40 easements funded through the Outdoor Heritage Fund, totaling 6,116.8 acres, have been or are being enrolled.

Evaluation and Outcome Plans

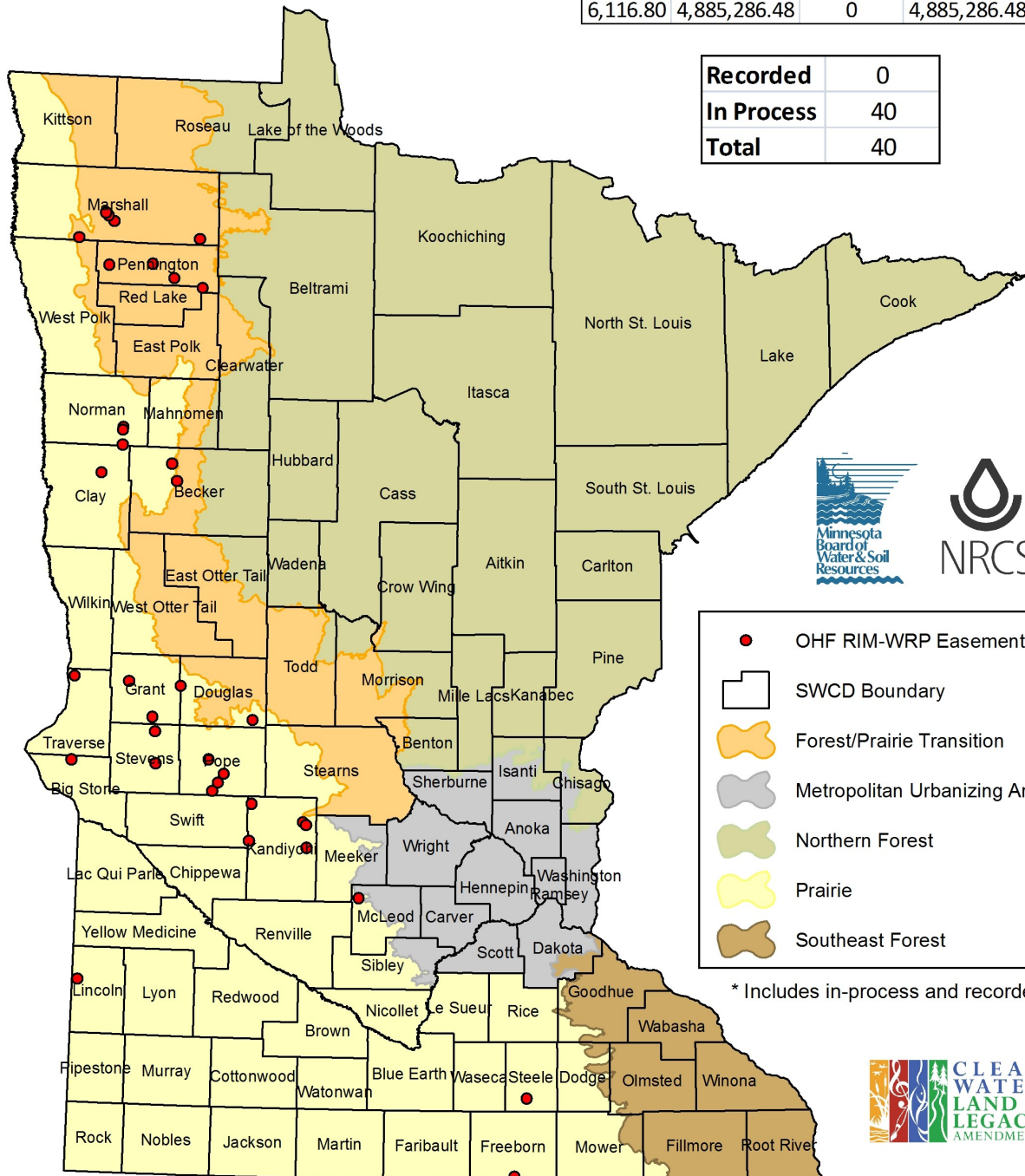
Accomplishment plans required by Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Fund identify the number of acres of permanent protection, restored wetlands and adjacent wildlife habitat. These RIM easements are a part of a comprehensive public-private partnership for habitat restoration, improved water quality and resource protection. These plans must include a long term stewardship plan and identify sources and amounts of funding. The long-term evaluation of easements will be monitored as part of the state's monitoring strategy. RIM easements are subject to ongoing inspection to ensure compliance for the duration of the easement in accordance with established guidelines.

RIM-WRP Acquisition and Restoration

Phase 3, 2011: OHF-Funded Easements *

Acres	Easement \$	Practice \$	Total \$
6,116.80	4,885,286.48	0	4,885,286.48

Recorded	0
In Process	40
Total	40



* Includes in-process and recorded.

